

On Pegasus Wings

Volume 1, Issue 1

February 1, 2007

From 'Fly to Glory' to 'On Pegasus Wings'

82nd CAB assumes OEF Army aviation mission from 10th CAB

Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble
Task Force Public Affairs Office

BAGRAM AIRFIELD – With the uncasing of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade colors Jan. 17, Task Force Pegasus assumed command and control of Army aviation assets for Combined Joint Task Force-76.

“Task Force Pegasus is trained and ready and proud to be part of the team. Task Force Pegasus is committed to build on the strong foundation ... [and] will continue to apply the lessons learned to eliminate unnecessary risk in every combat aviation operation,” said Col. Kelly Thomas, commander, 82nd CAB. “...there will be no dip in activity, capability or tenacity as [we] assume command.”

The 82nd CAB spent the last seven months of 2006 preparing for this deployment with numerous command post exercises, two rotations at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La., and an Aviation Training Exercise at Fort Rucker, Ala.

“This is not just a [transfer of authority]. It’s a seamless passage of command of aviation support,” said Maj. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley, commanding general, CJTF-76. “Your training, your discipline and your preparation have brought you to this fight ... and you are the backbone of the CJTF-76.”

This was the second rotation for the Soldiers and aviators of the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade’s Task Force Falcon who accomplished many feats during their 12 months in the area of operation. Task Force Falcon’s more than 2,300 personnel conducted numerous deliberate operations, quick reaction force missions, medical evacuation missions, combat missions and flew close to 57,000 flight hours.

“We want to set you up for success,” said Col. Michael Rose, commander, 10th CAB. “In our [time here], we’ve seen steady progress and there’s a lot of pride in what we’ve done. We wish you every success, and we want you to do it better than we did.”

“You gave us the right tools and put us in the right



Pfc. Aubree Rundle

The 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade Commander, Col. Kelly Thomas (left) and 82nd CAB Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. David Brasfield uncasing the brigade colors during the Transfer of Authority ceremony January 17 at Bagram Airfield.

places,” Thomas said. “I’m very impressed with Task Force Falcon – the standards you’ve set and the professionalism of your Soldiers on and off duty.”

Task Force Pegasus’s mission will be to conduct full spectrum combat aviation operations as well as provide logistical aviation support for coalition forces throughout the country, and humanitarian operations as needed.

Pegasus 6 expresses gratitude to family members

Col. Kelly Thomas
Task Force Pegasus Commander

Pegasus Family, it is my pleasure to tell you that we have safely arrived in Bagram, Afghanistan. We are currently settling in and adjusting to all of the nuisances of living and working in Afghanistan. So far, the biggest adjustment that we have had to make is the nine and a half hours difference between Fort Bragg and Bagram.

I know that your Paratrooper misses you, but we are working hard and are ready for our combat mission. We will continue to be very busy due to the change-over with 10th Mountain Combat Aviation Brigade.

All of the hours that we have put in to move from Fort Bragg to Bagram, getting settled in and establishing a positive working environment have been draining. I have been impressed by the professionalism that Task Force Pegasus has established in accomplishing those tasks.

I'm very proud of each and every one of their efforts and appreciate all of the hard work. We are truly on a very good start to this mission and deployment. The tremendous efforts of our Paratroopers have made our jobs easier, and remind us why we are proud to be apart of 82nd Airborne Division's Combat Aviation Brigade.

As we enter our second month here in Afghanistan, I just want to re-emphasize how important you are to the deployed Trooper. The support you See **GRATITUDE**, page 3.



Col. Kelly Thomas

Troopers must maintain 82nd CAB standards

Command Sgt. Maj. David Brasfield
Task Force Pegasus Command Sergeant Major

Whew!! We have finally arrived in Afghanistan and the Troopers of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade are ready to get after it. We've got a tough but rewarding mission ahead of us and we understand the world-wide impact of our service. The environment will be extremely challenging with the mountainous regions and the extreme temperatures, but the gruel-

ing summer long train-up along with our transformation into our new formations is going to pay big dividends. We must remember we are America's ambassadors and we must treat the people of Afghanistan with dignity and respect. The standards haven't changed. They aren't specific to Afghanistan or CJTF-76 standards. The standards are 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade standards that we all know.

To our Troopers in the rear, continue to improve upon our garrison operations. We are part of America's Strategic Response Force and must remain ready to deploy worldwide within 18 hours to answer our nation's call to duty as we continue to fight the Global War on Terrorism. I'm very proud of our Troopers for their thankless service and selfless sacrifice. For many of you, this is your second, third or maybe even fourth deployment and I know it's tough to be away from family members and friends. I will do everything I can to bring each one of you home safely. And to our families and friends back home, thank you can never be said enough for your continuous love, support and encouragement of our Troopers. Without you, we could not do the things we do. My sincere thanks and appreciation for all you do. On Pegasus Wings, Airborne All the Way!



Command Sgt. Maj. David Brasfield

Task Force Pegasus
OEF VIII
82nd Combat Aviation Brigade

On Pegasus Wings

Published by Task Force Pegasus Public Affairs

This Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of **On Pegasus Wings** are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army.

The editorial content of this monthly publication is the responsibility of the Task Force Pegasus Public Affairs, APO AE 09354.

Task Force Pegasus	
<p>Commander: Command Sgt. Maj.: Public Affairs Officer: Editor:</p>	<p>Col. Kelly Thomas Command Sgt. Maj. David Brasfield Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble Pfc. Aubree Rundle</p>
<p>Task Force Talon Bagram Lt. Col. Nicholas Chronis Command Sgt. Maj. James H. Franklin</p>	<p>Task Force Atlas Bagram Lt. Col. Frederick H. Jessen Command Sgt. Maj. Andrew Nichols</p>
<p>Task Force Corsair Kandahar Lt. Col. George Huggins Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Little</p>	<p>Task Force Desert Hawk Salerno Lt. Col. Donald Kwan Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Powers</p>

SUBMISSIONS OR COMMENTS:
PHONE : 231-2759 or E-mail : krishna.gamble@afghan.swa.army.mil

122nd ASB conducts first-ever combat sling load movement

Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble
Task Force Pegasus Public Affairs Office

BAGRAM AIRFIELD – A command post node team from Company C, 122nd Aviation Support Battalion conducted their first-ever combat sling load operation Jan. 14 en-route to a forward operating base.

The three Soldier team moved out to set up, establish and maintain computer networking systems for elements of the 4th Brigade Combat Team in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“The team will install, operate, maintain, a reliable secure, non-secure, and voice-over networking system communications for [a forward operating base],” said Staff Sgt. Anthony Suggs, platoon sergeant.

“Their jobs will be similar to what we do here [in Bagram]—set-up and monitor phone lines, internet and other [network] bands depending on the mission,” said Spc. Shawn Nguyen, satellite system operator.

The team is set to be forward for the duration of the deployment, but Suggs is working on a proposal to rotate teams to ensure all of his Soldiers receive this valuable training.

“The team will have to overcome an unknown environment, handle being in a hostile area and being somewhat isolated,” Suggs said. “But we have conducted multiple field training exercises, completed training at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La, and there are numerous support agencies available to all Soldiers.”

“I’m concerned about their safety [because of the area they are going into], but they are my best friends and they will be alright,” Nguyen said.

The sling load operation involved support from Company A, 277th Aviation Support Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Fort Drum, N.Y.



Courtesy photo

A Chinook transports equipment to a forward operating base as part of the 122nd Aviation Support Battalion’s first combat sling load movement Jan. 14 at Bagram.

“We used [several] one thousand-pound sling legs on both loads and we rigged dual point slings on both loads,” said 1st Lt. Nicholas Rowland, Co. A, 277th ASB, 10th CAB. “The dual point allows us to [use] the forward and aft hooks on the [Chinook] keeping the load flying smooth and straight.”

The CPN team, Sgt. Severn Mitchell, Spc. Felix Lora, and Pfc. James Masterson, volunteered for the mission according to Co. C commander, Capt. Akemi Skelton.

“These hard-working, technically stellar and true 82nd Troopers hit the ground running and had communication established for their assignment in less than 30 minutes. I am very proud of this team,” Skelton said.

“Our bread and butter is to provide 100 percent reliable communication support to the brigade. This is a great way to start a deployment.”

GRATITUDE from page 2

have given your Paratrooper positively affects the morale and welfare of all.

It is always a tough time to leave friends and family, but your words of encouragement and undying support will make this deployment go by quicker. The emails, phone calls, letters and care packages have been a huge help!

Keep up the good work! Thank you for all that you do for your Paratrooper. You truly are our heroes!

In closing, I know that you are as proud of this formation as I am. You are constantly in our thoughts and prayers. God bless each of you!

All the Way, Airborne...on Pegasus' Wings!

AVIATION DFAC HOURS :

Breakfast - 0200-0400Z / 0630-0830L

Lunch - 0700-0900Z / 1130-1330L

Dinner - 1200-1530Z / 1630-2000L

Equal opportunity for everyone, everywhere

Sgt. 1st Class Terrance Williams
Task Force Pegasus Equal Opportunity Advisor/
Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

It is the policy of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Pegasus, to provide equal opportunity and fair treatment for all Soldiers, family members and Department of the Army civilian employees without regard to **race, color, gender, religion, or national origin**, and to provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment.

The Equal Opportunity office is fully operational offering an array of services for all Soldiers in the area of operations. Some of the specific services include prevention of sexual harassment, sexual assault training, complaint/conflict resolution and focus groups/sensing sessions.

Classes and quarterly training in various areas will be added to each unit's calendar as well as cultural and ethnic events and observances. For example, on Jan. 16, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. observance was held at Bagram which included a video presentation, musical selection by the gospel choir and guest speaker. King's birthday is honored in all 50 of the United States, as well as more than 100 nations worldwide. This special day commemorates King's life work and accomplishments, bringing the American ideals of liberty and justice for all into reality.

February is African American/Black History Month. Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as Negro History Week and later as Black History Month.

This year's theme is *'From Slavery to Freedom: The Story of Africans in America'*. Contact your local/servicing EO office for details on upcoming events to commemorate Black/African American History Month.

In accordance with Combined Joint Task Force-76 and Task Force Pegasus policy, quarterly EO/Prevention of Sexual Harassment training is required for all personnel. Additionally, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) training is required within 90 days of entering theater and semi annually thereafter.

Commanders are reminded to utilize Command Climate Surveys to assist in identifying the successes and shortcomings in a given unit. For more information pertaining to training or surveys, contact your servicing EO Advisor or visit the EO Web page (SIPR) at: <http://www.cjtf76.centcom.smil.mil/>

The Task Force Pegasus EO/SARC office is located on Camp Albert in the south entrance of B-Hut, H-1 behind the Task Force Pegasus Reenlistment office.

For more information, call 231-1541.

Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain introduces field religious support teams

Chaplain (Capt.) Shmaul Felzenberg
Task Force Pegasus Chaplain

As the Pegasus war machine deploys and arrays its combat assets throughout the theater and country of Afghanistan, it is the privilege of the assigned chaplains and chaplain assistants to provide religious support to our Troopers.

This religious support is multifaceted, to include: denominational worship services, religious education, counseling, crisis intervention, and of course, ministry of presence. Whether it's walking the flight line, eating at the Pegasus dining facility, working in the office, attending a meeting at the tactical operations center, or visiting a sick Soldier in the aid station or hospital – you will likely see a Religious Support Team (RST) member engaged in providing ministry and moral support to our fellow Troopers.

Now that we have deployed, what was once called the UMT, Unit Ministry Team, is now referred to as RST – due to the joint/coalition environment in which we now operate.

The 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, now Task Force Pegasus, has five such RSTs who will be operating in theater – three here in Bagram, one in Kandahar and one in Salerno. At Bagram, the Task Force Pegasus RST is myself

and Staff Sgt. John Tanchak. For Task Force Talon RST, Chaplain (Capt.) Alan Irizarry and Sgt. Yohannis Selassie; Task Force Atlas RST, Chaplain (Capt.) Will Harrison and Spc. Randy Castner.

Serving our folks at Kandahar for Task Force Corsair is of Chaplain (Capt.) Matt Cassady and Spc. Jonathon Canfield. In Salerno with Task Force Desert Hawk RST will be Chaplain (1st Lt.) Kurt Bishop and his assistant from the Arizona National Guard who we welcome to the Pegasus family. Wherever a Pegasus Trooper may find themselves throughout the [area of operations], a chaplain is never far off.

The RST headquarters for the brigade is located in the Aviation Chapel Annex here in the heart of Camp Albert at Bagram. The phone number at the chapel is 231-2546/2547. We will gladly furnish you with any and all contact information for any of the subordinate Task Force RSTs. Upon complete departure of our 10th Mountain Task Force Falcon predecessors, the chapel will once again be fully operational to host everything from worship services, bible

See **CHAPLAIN** page 7.

Helpful tips for filing this year's taxes

Task Force Pegasus Legal Assistance Office

Tax season is here, like it or not. Here are some tips to make this a great filing year— hopefully with a nice refund.

Combat Zone Tax Benefits

As in past years, Soldiers who serve in a combat zone (CZ) or qualified hazardous duty area (QHDA) qualify for certain federal income tax benefits. Current CZs/QHDAs include Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, and certain overseas 'direct support areas.

Taxable Pay

For enlisted Soldiers and warrant officers, all military pay received for any part of a month served in a CZ/QHDA is excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes. For commissioned officers, the monthly exclusion is capped at the highest enlisted pay, plus any hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay received – up to \$6,642.60 per month in 2007.

Extension of Filing Deadline

The deadline for filing federal income tax returns is automatically extended until 180 days after the last day served in a CZ/QHDA, plus any time served there between 1 January and 17 April.

Filing Your Return

When filing your return, write COMBAT ZONE in red at the top of the return. If you will be deployed before you get a chance to file your taxes, you can email the IRS at combatzone@irs.gov to notify them of your status, but this is not necessary. Include your name, stateside address, birth date and date of deployment to the CZ/QHDA in your email.

Sale of Residence

Congress has relaxed the rules for taxing capital gains earned from selling your home. Before 2004, many Soldiers were unable to take advantage of a tax-free home sale because they had not owned and used the home as their principal residence for two of the five years immediately preceding the sale. Now, Soldiers can suspend the running of the 5 year period for up to 10 years, in order to meet the 2 year use requirement, when the use of the home is interrupted by any period of extended duty (90 days or more) where the Soldier is stationed more than 50 miles from the home.

Child Tax Credit/Earned Income Credit

Although combat pay is not included in income for purposes of calculating your Federal income tax, another recent change allows Soldiers to include combat pay in income when calculating the Additional Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Credit (EIC). This change means many Soldiers will now be able to claim these credits even

if they have no earned income to report or no tax liability as a result of deploying.

Why Pay To File?

Most military bases have a tax center that will file income taxes free for Soldiers, family members, and retirees. They will electronically file your taxes, meaning your refund will be directly deposited into your bank account within two weeks or less. Many Soldiers are also eligible to file online for free through www.militaryonesource.com and H&R Block. On the other hand, most commercial tax preparers charge \$75 or more just to plug numbers into an online form.

If you choose to go with a commercial preparer, watch out for Refund Anticipation Loans. Whenever a business offers to file your taxes and give you all or a portion of your refund the same day, they are actually offering you a loan. There are two downsides to getting this type of loan.

First, the interest rate is extremely high, often exceeding 200 percent. Second, you are liable for the loan even if the IRS holds up your refund for some reason.

Put Your Refund to Work

While you wait for that fat refund check to hit your bank account, consider this: most people fail to plan for retirement until it is too late.

You could ignore your retirement needs and spend your refund on something you don't really need but would just like to have. Or, you could invest all or a portion of your refund in a Roth IRA and avoid paying taxes on the investment gains you earn. Other investment alternatives include the Army Thrift Savings Plan, traditional IRAs, and mutual funds.

If you maxed out the Roth IRA or Thrift Savings Plan annual contribution limits every year until you turned 60, you could end up with \$2 million or more! For basic information about investing in IRAs, visit www.beginnersinvest.about.com/cs/iras/a/iracontribution.htm

Deployed Legal Services

The 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade Legal Office is open to provide powers of attorney and notary services to the personnel of Task Force Pegasus. Hours of operation are Monday-Saturday 0230z – 1500z. Additional client services are available on Bagram Airfield at the Legal Services Office, which is located next to the DHL office on Camp Koele. The Legal Services office is open for claims and legal assistance. The Bagram Legal Services Office provides POA and notary services on a daily basis as well as Legal Assistance appointments on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and walk in services on Saturday.

See TAXES, page 6.

Army pays big to keep Troops in boots

Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble
Task Force Pegasus Public Affairs Office

Until recently, only Soldiers of certain rank or military occupational specialty qualified for reenlistment bonuses. Soldiers also had to wait for their reenlistment window to open before they could reenlist. But as of Jan. 3, 2006, Soldiers in Zones A, B and C assigned or attached to units in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom who reenlist may receive a 1.5A, 1B, or 0.5C SRB.

Also, Soldiers with an original ETS date before or between Oct. 1, 2006 and Sept. 30 may be eligible for a reenlistment bonus up to \$22,500. The 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade—Task Force Pegasus—deployed to Afghanistan last month. Since then, more than \$325,000 in reenlistment bonuses has been awarded to more than 25 Troopers.

“The Soldiers are knocking my door down to raise their right hand, recite the oath and continue service in the Army,” said Master Sgt. Keith Smith, Task Force Pegasus Career Counselor. “The bonus helps out, but I think Soldiers believe in what they are doing here and they believe in their leaders.”

“I want to be a part of the Army. I want the experiences and the many opportunities the Army [offers],” said Spc. Nicholas Kovacs, who reenlisted for five years and changed his MOS from aviation operations to cargo helicopter crew chief.

“The guidance, direction and leadership I received from [my NCOs], helped me to see that there’s more to my future in the Army,” said Sgt. Daniel Vincent, who reenlisted for four years and a bonus.



Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble

The 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade Commander, Col. Kelly Thomas prepares to render the oath of enlistment Jan. 10 to 82nd CAB Soldiers at the aviation dining facility Bagram Airfield.

The experience, opportunities and big bonuses were not the only factors for some Soldiers. Education, family benefits and family tradition also played a major role in the decision to stay Army.

“I’m a fifth generation [service member] so for me it was tradition,” said Sgt. Jonathan Cunningham, who reenlisted for six years with a bonus.

“This was the right decision for me and my family,” said Sgt. Matthew Blair, who reenlisted for six years with a bonus.

“I didn’t do it for the money,” said Sgt. 1st Class Eric Stewart. “I did it because Soldiers need leadership.” Stewart, who works in military intelligence, reenlisted for an indefinite period in the Army.

Since October 2006, reenlistment options are available to all Soldiers who are within their 24-month reenlistment window. Additionally, there are new messages and guidelines for Soldiers outside of the reenlistment window to be eligible for a bonus.

For more information, log onto www.armyreenlistment.com/board.htm or contact your unit retention team or career counselor.



Courtesy photo

Captain Patrick R. Wilde shakes hands with Sgt. 1st Class Malwante R. Stewart after completing his reenlistment Jan. 17 at Bagram Airfield.

TAXES from page 5

The hours of operation for the Legal Services Office are: Monday-Friday 0430z - 1100z and Saturday 0430z - 1300z

Trial Defense Services is located on Camp Dragon. They do Article 15 briefings every Tuesday and Thursday at 0500z.

Preventable accidents impacts everyone's mission

Task Force Pegasus Safety Office

The Task Pegasus Safety team here to support you and do what we can to help address any legitimate safety concerns. All Soldiers are responsible for their safety and the safety of others. If you see an unsafe act, it is your duty to correct the situation. If you do not have the authority or the resources to correct the problem on the spot, contact your Task Force safety office or your chain of command.

Remember safety in daily duties to avoid injury to personnel and damage to equipment. Here are some other tips:

Vehicle safety

Wear your seat belt at all times. Four wheel drive will help you get started on slick surfaces but it doesn't help you stop. Obey posted speed limits. Use extreme caution when operating a vehicle on the flight line or around aircraft. Give aircraft the right of way. Do not drive on the flight line unless absolutely necessary for the mission!



Courtesy photo

B-hut safety

Do not smoke in the b-huts. No open flames, candles, incense, or space heaters allowed. It takes less than 30 seconds for smoke in a burning B-hut to reach

incapacitating levels. Do not overload outlets and use power strips with a built-in circuit breaker instead of extension cords.

Ice and snow

Snowball fights may be fun but ice ball fights are not. Walk carefully to avoid slipping and walk on cleared areas whenever possible.

Cold weather injuries

Supervisors, identify your soldiers with prior hot or cold weather injuries and monitor them closely. Dress appropriately for changing conditions. Some of us have a higher tolerance for the cold than others but the temperature can vary greatly throughout the day and you do not want to get caught in the cold 15 minutes away from your cold weather gear. It is always better to have and not need than to need and not have.

Buddy system

In addition to wearing your reflective belt, use the buddy system when traveling at night. There is safety in numbers and the cold can turn even a minor injury into a deadly one if there is no one around to help.

The Task Force Pegasus Safety Team is here to serve you with any safety issues. For more information, call 231-4520 or visit the safety office on the second floor of the Task Force Pegasus Tactical Operation Center.

CHAPLAIN from page 4 — studies, recreational events such as movie night, and other events, gatherings and/or meetings based upon request – a robust religious program for a robust force.

While Task Force Pegasus is deployed to provide aviation and aviation support operations to U.S. and Coalition forces throughout the [area of operations], our spouses, families, and brigade rear detachment at Fort Bragg, N.C. are likewise afforded brigade-internal chaplaincy support. Days prior to our departure, we were backfilled with an activated Reservist chaplain, Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Jeremy Steinberg. Steinberg brings with him years of experience as he provides support to those who we left behind, but whom we hold close at heart.

As chaplains we encourage all Pegasus Troopers to become actively aware and involved with the local installation-wide religious support program, especially the one here at Bagram. Conveniently scheduled services – flyers posted throughout Camp Albert – for most every major

denomination such as Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, etc., are available for your benefit and enjoyment.

Our Soldiers are indeed serving both God and country in this austere environment. Our Troopers are making sacrifices beyond the comprehension of the normal American citizen, helping to ensure freedom and combat terrorist tyranny the world throughout. May they always lead from the front – militarily and spiritually. All the way!



Pfc. Aubree Rundle



Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble

Above left, Brain Bougher from Senora, Calif. and Jeff Archbault from Milton, Fla. make repairs to a Chinook engine. Bougher and Archbault are part of the civilian contract team supporting Task Force Pegasus.

Below, Troopers from Company D, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade pull the blades off of Chinook for maintenance.



Pfc. Aubree Rundle

Above, Sgt. 1st Class Andre Greene, Task Force Pegasus Property Book NCOIC, carefully balances a tray of desserts as Staff Sgt. Clayton Bradley, DFAC training NCO looks on. Greene along with several senior NCOs from the Pegasus Brigade, gave the dining facility staff a break Jan. 26 by filling in as servers for the evening meal.



Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble



Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble

Sergeant Daniel Vincent, outjumps Spc. Heron Perez to score two points during a weekend basketball game at Camp Albert.

Proper self-care, hygiene can prevent illness

Maj. Michele Curtis-Jackson
Task Force Pegasus Physician Assistant

Happy New Year from the Task Force Pegasus Aviation Aide Station. New year, new mission. Since arriving at Bagram Airfield, Task Force Pegasus personnel have endured close-quarter living arrangements and extreme cold weather conditions such as snow, ice and below zero temperatures. All these factors combined could facilitate symptoms for chill-blain, frostbite, the common cold or pneumonia. It is important that all military and civilian personnel take necessary precautions to protect themselves and others from illness.

The first line of defense against extreme cold is to dress correctly. Wear at least three layers of clothing, beginning with an inner layer of cotton or synthetic weave to allow your skin to breathe. The middle layer should be a fabric like wool or

synthetic fabric to absorb sweat and retain insulation. The third, outer layer should break the wind and allow some ventilation. Also, special care should be taken to properly cover the head, where 40 percent of body heat can be lost, as well as the feet, hands and face, which are most prone to frostbite. Make sure your foot and hand gear is thoroughly waterproof, but keep a change of clothes at work in case your clothes get wet.

Chill-blain occurs due to cold air and cold water on hands and feet. The symptoms include swelling of hands and feet, redness and burning sensation and itching. It is basically an abnormal reaction to cold, and if the infection is not treated, cracks and finally erosion can occur, which can lead to the ulceration of skin.

Frostbite occurs when skin and sometimes muscle tissue freeze due to exposure. It usually affects the hands and feet, which your body has kept colder in order to save heat in the rest of the body, or the exposed skin on ears, cheeks and noses. One is at risk for frostbite at temperatures below 30

degrees, although wind chill effects can also cause frostbite at above-freezing temperatures. The tissue damage can be irreversible, and in rare cases amputation is sometimes necessary. Early symptoms of frostbite include a tingling, stinging, or aching feeling in exposed area followed by numbness. Treat frostbite by covering affected areas with dry, sterile gauze or soft, clean cloth bandages.

Do not massage the area; it can worsen the injury. Severe cases require hospitalization.

The common cold is just that – common. Most common colds are viral in nature and are treatable with over-the-counter decongestants, supplements and cough syrups. Colds typically last three to five days. Symptoms include sneezing, sniffing, runny nose, nasal congestion; scratchy, sore, or phlegmy throat; coughing; headache; and tiredness. Because the common cold is viral, there is no cure. And if untreated, cold symptoms can exacerbate into ear pain, strep throat,

bronchitis or pneumonia.

Some helpful tips to prevent the spread of germs and lower risk of getting sick: wash hands with warm, soapy water or use hand sanitizer; cover your

mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and wash hands afterwards; wear a warm scarf around your neck, gargling with warm, salt water, drinking warm beverages and soup.

If symptoms seem to worsen, visit your nearest medical treatment facility or aide station for further evaluation.

With 10th Mountain's movement back to Fort Drum, N.Y., we wish them well and thank them for a smooth transition. All the Way! For more information, call 231-2411.

Editor's note: Information used in this article gleaned from www.healthresources.com



Camp Albert sick call hours:
Monday- Saturday - 0430-0630z / 0900-1100L
1200-1300z / 1630-1730L
Sunday - 0430-0630z / 0900-1100L



New law puts more pressure on VA to protect against ID theft

John Neville

Army News Service

In December, President Bush signed into law the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2006. In addition to expanding healthcare benefits and setting aside money for new facilities, the bill is an attempt to better secure the personal data of millions of veterans. It also requires the VA to follow specific procedures if such a theft occurs again.

Last May, a laptop containing the names and Social Security numbers of 26.5 million veterans and 2.2 million members currently serving with the National Guard and Reserve were stolen from the home of a VA data analyst.

It was feared that thieves would use the information for identity theft crimes, but that turned out not to be the case. The laptop was eventually recovered, and a subsequent FBI investigation concluded that such information wasn't lifted from the computer's hard drive.

"There is also no indication that the information was accessed," said Phil Budahn, a spokesman for the VA in Washington D.C., during a telephone interview two weeks ago with the "Turret."

"The FBI has ways of looking at a hard drive and telling whether information in a particular file has been opened. We've seen no indication that it had."

Under the new law, the VA will use encryption protection for all data, according to Budahn. The VA will also centralize its management of information technology and security systems.

"We're convinced that the centralization (of the data) will permit us to exert the highest possible standards across the entire agency," Budahn said. "We're about 230,000 people as far as employees. It's the second largest federal agency. To put that all under one office with everyone using form standards and being accountable in the same way is a formidable undertaking."

If such a breach does occur again, the VA is now required to notify those affected so that they may act promptly to prevent or at least minimize damage. The VA

must also issue fraud alerts to those affected.

A fraud alert is a notice placed on a person's credit report that requires creditors to contact the person before new credit is issued under that name.

The VA must also provide credit-monitoring services to those who've had their information compromised. Companies hired to monitor credit will alert customers when there has been:

New account activity - whenever a new account is opened in the customer's name.

Address change - Thieves opening an account (in the victim's name) are also likely to use a different address. The service will alert customers to such attempts.

Account information changes - If other changes are made to information on the account, such as the amount borrowed, the customer will be notified.

Changes to public records - Customers will also be alerted to any change made to the type of public records that appear on a credit report, such as the status of bankruptcies or legal judgments.

Closed accounts - A customer will be alerted if his or her account has been closed.

Collection accounts - Monitoring services will alert customers if any action is related to collection services.

Inquiries to credit information - A credit-monitoring service will alert the customer if an inquiry is made to the customer's credit file. The new bill also requires the VA to submit reports to Congress about the breach.

Finally, the VA must provide identity-theft insurance, which reimburses victims for costs incurred in restoring their identity and repairing credit reports.

"We're absolutely committed to what our secretary has called the 'gold standard of information security,'" said Budahn. "We've dramatically tightened our processes for protecting information since that incident, and it's very important to note that it didn't involve any patient records."

Editor's note: John Neville is a staff writer with *The Turret*.



Sher Dil Qaderi talks with Chief Warrant Officer Keith Davis, Task Force Pegasus Intel Tech., Jan. 28 after an officer professional development discussion hosted by Task Force Pegasus. Sher Dil is one of the two surviving members of the original 30 Mujahadeen recruited to fight the Russians and the Taliban in the early 1980s.

Sgt. 1st Class Krishna M. Gamble